Dedicated to the farm workers' sharecroppers', tenants' and small owners' struggle for union, justice and a better life.

SOUTHERN FARM LEADER

OFFICIAL ORGAN SHARE CROPPERS UNION

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WASHINGTON HEARS FARM WORKERS' PLEA FOR RECOGNITION

Meeting First in History, Miserable Conditions of Sharecroppers Told; Show How Relief Agencies Help Force Down Wages

By C. L. JOHNSON

Washington, D. C.—On March 27 and 28 for the first time in the history of this country, representive sharecroppers and agricultural workers' unions got together with government officials in Washington and discussed their problems.

McPudden of the Lettuce Workers Union (AFL) in Imperial Valley, California, told of the miserable conditions there, of relief agencies cooperating with employers to force wages down, of vigilante gangs organized by rich farmers to smash strikes and unions, and of murder of unarmed strikers by state police and vigilantes.

Lief Dahl of the New Jersey Agricultural Workers Union (AFL) described agricultural workers' conditions and showed how they were treated as "social, economic and political lepers." He exposed the WPA blacklist whereby relief agencies fire union men, mark their registration card and file it so that the big farmers, coming to relief agencies to hire labor, can discriminate against union men.

Howard Kester, E. B. McKinney, Walter Mosop, Blackstone, W. W. Gollehan and Otis Sweeden described conditions in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma. Kester related how the government had given sharecroppers in Arkansas the run-around when they fought for a fair deal under the AAA. All of the delegates told of landlord terror, violations of every kind of human right, and use of police authorities and relief agencies in supressing union activities.

Florida Citrus workers explained how the Ku Klux Klan worked to smash their unions, how relief was cut off about two weeks before the rich farmers needed them in the fields (this was a complaint voiced by every delegation), how Joseph Shoemaker, labor organizer had been murdered.

Paul Arias of Colorado and Beet workers from Michigan described conditions in the sugar beet fields, where there are growing rapidly, Mexican workers are discriminated against and threatened with deportation when they strike for higher wages.

W. G. Irby of the Alabama Farmers' Union and the delegates from the Share Croppers Union, including Harry Williams, Alabama Farmer, C. L. Johnson and a Mississippi Farmer described conditions in Alabama and Louisiana, the attempt of the planters on the part of reactionary government agencies and declared that the Federal Government must come to the assistance of the toiling farmers.

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that the government must step in and restore political rights to these people. He voiced the warning that unless the government made definite provisions in the Soil Conservation program for agricultural laborers that bitter struggles would be waged by the unions to gain their rights.

Government officials said very little that meant anything to the delegates. For the most part they attempted to justify the government program and tried to explain that they couldn't do more for the sharecroppers and agricultural workers.

At the closing session union men spoke to the nation over the Columbia Broadcasting System. W. W. Alexander of the Resettlement Administration was scheduled to speak but didn't show up.

On Monday following the conference the delegates were invited to discuss problems with Frank Morrison, secretary of the American Federation of Labor and with John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America. Both of these union leaders promised support to the sharecroppers and agricultural workers.

Delegates returned home disappointed in what the government had said but with determination to build their unions stronger than ever in order to push their program ahead.

All delegates signed a letter of appreciation to Gardner Jackson, Chairman of the National Committee on Rural Social Planning which arranged the conference, for his untiring work in behalf of the sharecroppers and agricultural workers and as the chief organizer of the conference.

BUILD YOUR UNION
Organize the unorganized

Oklahoma Tenant Farmers Hold First State Convention

The Oklahoma section of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union met in the Muskogee Convention Hall Saturday, April 25th., in the first State Convention of the organization ever held in Oklahoma. There were approximately 65 delegates and visitors present. A program for the organization of all farm labor in the state was drawn up, and a call issued by the Convention to the organized and unorganized to join with the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, a non political organization devoted to the interests of the tenants, sharecroppers and farm labor of the State.

A state Executive Committee was elected to serve for the coming year. Drew Morton of Kingston, Oklahoma was elected president; Robert Winstead of Tullahassee, vice president, and Odis L. Sweeden of Muskogee as secretary. A special problem involving members in the Wagoner County was taken up by the Convention and support for the Negro workers in securing the right to vote in that County was pledged by Howard Kester, secretary of the Central Defense Committee of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. Oklahoma is one of the few Southern States granting the right of suffrage to members of the Negro race. For 21 years the people of Wagoner County have been illegally disfranchised. They have appealed to the Courts and have been blocked in their efforts to secure their rights. It is reported that a Federal District Judge who is the author of the "grandfather clause" in the State Constitution, that was later held unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court, stops all appeals.

ALA. SHARECROPPER DISAPPEARS; THOUGHT KILLED BY LANDLORDS

Fab Caldwell, Negro Sharecropper Can't Be Found After Complaint to Government AAA Investigators! Landlord Held AAA Payments

Waverly, Ala. — Fab Caldwell Negro sharecropper in Tallapoosa County, has been missing two weeks following his report to an AAA investigator that Woodson Walker, his landlord, had kept his Parity check. Walker openly threatened to kill the person that reported him and throw the body in Martin's Lake.

It is reasonably suspected that Walker murdered, or was an accessory in the murder, of Fab Caldwell.

At the present time Howard Gray, another Waverly landlord reported for with-holding AAA checks, is offering $100 reward to the person who will tell him who made the report and threatens to throw that person in Martin's Lake.

The Share Croppers Union, in a letter to Chester Davis, AAA Administrator, named several landlords who had denied croppers and tenants their benefit checks the list included Walker and Gray. This was one of the steps in the union's fight to get a fair deal for sharecroppers and tenants under the AAA program.

The Share Croppers Union is calling all workers, farmers and believers in human rights and justice, all farmers organizations, trade unions, fraternal organizations and churches to wire resolutions of protest to Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace, Washington, D. C. demanding an immediate investigation of Caldwell's disappearance and the immediate arrest of Woodson Walker as the suspected murderer of Fab Caldwell. Similar resolutions should be sent to Governor Graves, Montgomery, Alabama and to Sheriff Cliff Corprew, Dadeville, Alabama.

NOTED FARM LEADER DIES

Excelsior Springs, Mo.—Milo Reno, 70-year-old farm leader of Des Moines, Iowa, and president of the Farmers' Holiday Association, died May 5 following a lingering illness.

The president of the Holiday Association, suffered from influenza, rheumatism and a chronic heart ailment, Dr. Grace said.

He led the startling farm strikes of a few years ago when prices of farm products, declining over a period of 10 years, reached their low point in 1932-33. These farm strikes were to the farmers what the Hunger Marches and Bonus Marches were to the unemployed workers and the veterans.

He organized the National Farmers' Holiday Association in 1932 and served as it's president until his death.

POLICE ATTACK CELERY WORKERS

Culver City, Calif. (AFLNS).—About 300 striking celery workers in the celery fields near here were attacked by police using tear gas bombs in an attempt to disperse the strikers. The clash took place when a number of the strikers arrived at the celery fields to persuade non-striking workers to join them. Most of the strikers were Mexicans and Filipinos. The operators of the celery fields are Japanese. When the police unlimbered their tear gas bombs the strikers responded with sticks, clods and celery crates. The casualties on both sides were numerous.

Union Leader's Home Raided By Thugs, Police

Birmingham, Ala.—On March 21 the home of C. L. Johnson, secretary of the Share Croppers Union was raided by Milton McDuff, head of the National Detective Agency, and Paul Gains a members of the police force of Tarrant City, Ala. Neither of them had a search warrant and when asked for one they said they didn't have to have one. They carried off books, papers, documents, letters, membership books and stamps belonging to the Union.

Efforts were made to get a warrant against McDuff and Gains because of their illegal entry and search and because of their confiscation of property. Major Ingram of Tarrant City refused to issue a warrant refering Johnson to the city attorney about the case. The city attorney said it was [illegible] his jurisdiction" and referred [illegible] to the County Solicitor. The County Solicitor flatly refused to issue a warrant saying "McDuff had a right to take union literature."

Action thru the civil courts against McDuff by Johnson will be started. McDuff has long been known in the community and in the state of Alabama as a strike-breaker. Following the raid on Johnson's home he proceeded to raid the home of [illegible] Alabama sharecropper and organizer of the Red Cypress Local.

SOUTHERN FARM LEADER

This is the first printed issue of the official organ of the Share Croppers Union, formerly called Union Leader. After two years of struggle, thru untold hardships, against every kind of landlord tyranny, we have good reason to be proud of our progress. We hope that Southern Farm Leader will at all times give correct and courageous leadership to the Union. We hope that the members will spread this paper to every community, as a means of building the union and winning new victories.

We hope that every local will see that each paper is paid for so that we can publish it every month, without fail. We want our readers to write letters to the paper, criticising what you think is incorrect, suggesting new methods, and giving information on how you are being cheated and robbed by landlords and county agents. Describe your conditions.

There is much to be won. The misery, poverty, slavery and lynch terror has to be wiped out. What today is a "Sunny South" for the rich must and shall become a land of plenty, freedom and happiness for the masses of white and Negro workers and farmers.

Our voice is becoming stronger and stronger. Through the organization of all sharecroppers, tenants and small owners in one mighty Farmers Union and the organization of all farm wage workers in one Agricultural Workers Union, we will be strong enough to end the fear of the lords in the tyrants and outlaws in the pseudo-democracy of their lands. We will say we do not like the Southern Farm Leader.

We Speak To The Nation

(Note: The following radio speeches were made at the Conference of Agricultural Workers in Washington on March 28.)

INTRODUCTION

By GARDNER JACKSON,
Chairman of the National Committee on Rural Social Planning.

This is the final event of a most unique conference. Never before, so far as we can ascertain, have agricultural workers and sharecroppers been invited to confer with government officials here in Washington.

These toilers in the fields—representing the fruit and vegetable workers of Arizona and California; the citrus workers of Florida; the beet workers of Colorado, Montana, Idaho, Nebraska and Michigan; the agricultural workers of New Jersey and New York; and the sharecroppers of Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and Oklahoma—have for two days been presenting their problems to the government and their suggestions for improvement of their conditions.

They are truly the forgotten men of this and all other administrations here at the Capital. There are roughly three million sharecroppers in the cotton South. They represent a population of somewhere around 25 million, a sixth of the entire population of the country.

By HARRY WILLIAMS
President of the Share Croppers Union

I am speaking in the name of the Share Croppers Union for hundreds of thousands of families in the South who are practically starving.

These folks who work on the cotton plantations get less to eat and less to wear than anybody else.

Since we have had the AAA program, thousands of sharecroppers have been turned off the plantations because the landlords don't need them any more.

OWNERS GET THE CHECK

These same families got practically nothing from the money the government paid out to the cotton producers, because the government failed to see to it that the sharecropper was protected in his rights.

Whenever the sharecroppers complained about not getting AAA checks these compiaints were always sent back to the county officers by the government. The sharecropper was beaten up for complaining.

NO RELIEF FOR UNION CROPPERS

We have sickness and starvation all over the sharecroppers and wage workers and poor farmers are not able to get relief, except only here and there.

The only way to get relief is by getting some plantation owner to tell the government relief folks that it is all right to give relief.

And if you are a union man you don't get anybody to stand up for you.

Because they make our children work in the fields and don't give us schools it is hard for any of us to get an education.

GOVERNMENT MUST HELP

New the union man wants the government to treat sharecroppers like human beings. We want protection in our right to organize. We want some relief from the government.

We want this new farm act of the government to do something besides making the plantation owner fat and the sharecropper miserable and hungry.

That's what the sharecroppers in Alabama want. That's what sharecroppers everywhere want from Uncle Sam.

By HOWARD KESTER
Organizer for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and Editor of the Sharecroppers' Voice.

In the cotton fields of the south one finds the most exploited, degraded and brutalized workers of America. "They have obtained the rights," a prominent American writes, "that peasants had acquired in the Middle Ages under feudalism."

Thousands of those victims of King Cotton's ruthless tyranny have organized under the banner of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union.

During their brief existence these organizations have withstood wave after wave of terror and violence. Their leaders have been killed and mobbed, their members illegally arrested and jailed, their meetings broken up, churches and meeting houses burned and wrecked, homes riddled with machine gun bullets, their entire membership terrorized.

CROPPERS AND TENANTS MUST GET SHARE

The way to a new freedom and democracy is very clear. As regards the cotton country, government benefits must be divided in proportion to the interest of those who till the land have in the crops. Tenants and sharecroppers must be given real guarantees of tenure. They must be granted some real voice in control committees. They must be allowed to organize for their own economic education, protection and advancement. The National Administration must defend our people in their right peaceably to assemble and bargain collectively.

We have no great faith in the adequacy of the Soil Conservation Act to protect or advance the interest of the actual tillers of the soil. What actually will happen remains to be seen. We are interested in soil conservation, but we are most interested in conserving human lives.

Hundreds of thousands of tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farm day laborers are today without crops and without jobs. Although farming is the only thing they know, they have no access to the land whatsoever.

We want land. Land for the landless is our cry and our warning. We want land on which to produce food to fill our hungry mouths, land on which to live and make a home, land on which we, with a socially minded America, may build a decent world in which men may live.

BUILD UNIONS FOR MORE ABUNDANT LIFE

Let there be no illusions as to how this life will come.

Neither private nor governmental philanthropy will move to give us these things. We will get these things only when we are strong enough. We will get them as we build a powerful organization of the sharecroppers and agricultural workers. To this task the Southern Tenant Farmers Union dedicates itself.

To HARRY WILLIAMS— ALABAMA SHARE-CROPPER

By OPAL ANNETTE FERRIER,
Compton, California, who was inspired by Brother William's radio speech.

Democracy—you have never had a finer tribute laid
At your sacred feet by any free-born builder of empire
Than, when today, painfully, the Man with the Hoe spoke, and made
A plea in your name that he might attain a man's desire
For tools and land and all the needful things for honest earning.
He did not ask—even less than slave—for a paternal care.
No. Articulate in desperation, he asked for right
To earn his way, honestly plead for even his life, to share
The burden and the glory of your cause; easefully he might
Have moaned and set his course by some Utopian yearning.
Democracy—that they who are forgotten should demand
In your name, is like a prayer from the fundamental earth.
Let their direst need and broken word be your command
To prove yourself for you must die when such as these have lost their worth.

The Program of Abundance

(Editor's note: A paragraph of this statement has been omitted for lack of space. The program and list of endorsers may be obtained from the Farmers National Committee for Action, P. O. Box 540, Minneapolis, Minnesota.)

With the AAA knocked out by the Supreme Court, the Roosevelt Administration is preparing new farm legislation which continues the principles of the old AAA. The recommended policy is to continue reducing farm production in spite of President Roosevelt's open statement that "The average of our citizenship lives today on what would be called by the medical fraternity a third class diet." In the face of this, reduced production is wrong. The real thing needed is to increase production while we put buying power into the hands of the working people.

Farmers require:

CASH BENEFIT PAYMENTS
SECURITY OF THE HOME
HIGHER PRICES FOR LARGER CROPS

The following are the most important measures for putting into practice the above principles:

I. CASH BENEFIT PAYMENTS

A—Past commitments for benefit payments under the old AAA must be paid in full.

B—Crop failures and low prices have made wide sections of farmers absolutely dependent on government cash payments. Therefore it is basic for farmers' welfare that whatever farm legislation may be passed shall include cash payments to working farmers AT LEAST EQUAL to the benefit payments under the old AAA, until farmers are receiving cost of production prices.

C—In cases where benefit payments are inadequate for any farm family to maintain a decent American standard of living, supplementary cash relief shall be provided.

II. SECURITY OF THE HOME

The FRAZIER LEMKE REFINANCING BILL must be passed, with the necessary funds raised preferrably by a tax on profits, income, and capital. Figures for the last half of 1935 show a sharp increase in foreclosures, throughout the country. Therefore it is all the more urgent that support for this bill be redoubled, so that its enactment can be won during this session of Congress.

III. HIGHER PRICES FOR LARGER CROPS

A—Every farmer requires COST OF PRODUCTION in order to maintain a decent level of living. By cost of production we mean a price far higher than today whereby the average farmer can at least pay his bills, operating costs and his family's living expenses.

B—INCREASED PRODUCTION at cost of production is needed by the nation today. The United States Department of Agriculture reports:

"To feed 125,000,000 people according to the best standards nearly 40 million acres would have to be added to the land now using food and feed crops. Milk cows would have to increase from 25.1 million head to 46.8 million head. Chickens would go from 411.6 millions to 627.3 millions. Sharp increases over 1935 would also be needed in beef cattle, hogs, and sheep in order to supply the meat necessary for a healthful diet.

Therefore we oppose the policy of reduction. We do not oppose soil conservation except when it is used as a means of giving the Secretary of Agriculture power to force farmers to reduce production on good land. In fact, we endorse true soil conservation because we need soil for big crops.

Congress should take two steps:

First, encourage the scientific increase of production to the level which the health of the people requires.

Second, Congress must guarantee buying power to the whole population by the passage of the Frazier-Lemke Unemployment, Old Age Pension and Social Insurance Bill, now before Congress, known as S. 3475.

There are adequate resources available to meet the financial obligations which will be incurred by carrying out of the above program. Such sources include: The diversion to farm relief of a large part of the immense war appropriations; diversion of funds now going to the federal bureaucracy; increasing the taxation on the wealth and income of the great financial and industrial interests of this country, with special emphasis on the giant companies which handle food products.

We point out that the United States Supreme Court is a menace against all legislation which interferes with the profits of the monopolies. It is necessary for Congress to curb the power of the Supreme Court in order to safeguard the social legislation which the good of the nation requires. This power is expressly granted to the Congress in Article III Section 1 and 2 of the Constitution which reads:

"The judicial power shall extend to all cases in law and equity arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, . . . (etc.) In all the . . . cases before mentioned the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction both as to law and fact, with such exceptions and under such regulations as Congress shall make."

We propose that this program be brought to the attention of all possible groups of farmers and all other people concerned with the farm problem so that the will of the people may be made unmistakably clear to Congress and the Administration.

BUILD YOUR UNION

AAA Payments Boon for Big Landlords, Banks

Wasington, D. C.—We have said time and again that the big landlords and corporations get the benefit from the AAA. Here is the proof of it from Secretary Wallace, who was forced to let the cat out of the bag when Congress asked for figures.

COTTON

$84,000—the largest cotton check "in 1933" to an Arkansas company; it got $115,700 in 1934.

$80,000—also to an Arkansas company in 1933.

$54,200—to the Delta and Pine Land Co. in 1933 and $127,747 in 1934. This company, controlled by English textile interests, was headed by Oscar Johnson before he became manager of the AAA cotton pool.

$43,200—to the Mississippi State Penitentiary.

$25,500—to an Arkansas jail.

SUGAR

$1,067,665—to the U. S. Sugar Corporation.

$1,022,037—to one Hawaiian sugar company.

$961,064—to a Puerto Rican company.

$860,000—to the Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Co. which will get more than a million dollars when back payments are made.

$705,488—to a bank in New York City.

$181,000—to a Louisiana concern, followed by payments of $170,876; $109,859 and $101,524 to other plantations in the state.

RICE

$63,768—to a California producer plus 18 payments over $25,000 each to other producers.

TOBACCO

$41,454—to a Florida concern for not raising tobacco.

This list of big payments is not complete by any means. These banks, corporations and rich farmers are getting millions of dollars from the AAA for NOT allowing us to raise the necessities of life, and as a result we have been evicted from the land, starved and beaten worse than ever before. Where is that "surplus" the government is crying about? We could use it!

The miserable little $10 and $15 checks that were supposed to come to us landed in the landlords pocket. And when we ask for our share we suffer murder and terror by landlord gangs. We who do the work want the payments. That is our demand on the government.

Use Union Tabocco

Expensive advertising tells of the wonders of Luckies, Chesterfields, Old Golds and Camels. But these advertisements don't tell about the life and wages of the people that make these cigarettes. Many families average only 91 days of work in the year. The majority of the workers earn less than $150 a year—about $3.00 a week. But the companies they work for, Reynolds Tobacco Company for example, paid $30,000,000 in dividends. The workers in these four biggest companies are denied their right to have unions. They have no voice in determining the conditions under which they work.

In the union factories the conditions are much better. The brands that are made by union labor are Spud, Kool, Raleigh and Wings. The smoking tobacco brands include Sir Walter Raleigh, Dial, Catabac, Golden Grain, Bugler, Target, Kite and Old North State. Their products are good.

The Tobacco Workers International Union also has help in the [illegible]

OUR READERS WRITE

COTTON WORKERS AFFIDAVIT

State: Alabama,
County: Jefferson.

I put in an application for a Government farm with Mr. Crawford Howard, the County agent in Macon County located in Tuskeegee. Mr. Howard promised me a farm. When Mr. Millard Murphy, who lived near Notasulga heard about this he went and told Mr. Howard that he was depending on me and my family to work day labor for him, and not to give a farm. Then Mr. Howard told me he couldn't give me the farm because Mr. Murphy was depending on me. Mr. Murphy asked me why didn't I tell him I was after a Government farm. Mr. Murphy said the Government was slow and I wouldn't get a farm. I had a clear receipt of debt to Mr. Murphy. He told me that if I could beat his wages to get off the place and get another house. I had (7) seven in my family and Mr. Murphy would not pay me more than fifty (.50) cents a day. Mr. Riley May offered me seventy-five (.75) cents and would feed me. Mr. Murphy had said he didn't need me and said the same to Mr. May. When I got the job he said to get out of his house if I didn't work for him. I paid him two ($2.00) dollars a month rent for the one room shack. I moved to Mrs. Molly McKee's place. On Sunday, March 15, 1936, in the morning, Mr. Millard Murphy, my landlord, Mr. Marion Evans, and Mr. Punch Thompson, other landlords, rushed into my house without hailing me. I was sitting down by the fire. They yelled "Get up; God dam you, get up." I tried to get out but Murphy and Evans grabbed me and then all three of them started knocking me over the head with an oak stick. They hit me on the arm so hard it almost broke it. There are seven scars on my head now to show for it. Mrs Mollie McKee, who lives at Notasulga was my new landlord, and she told these people to stay away. That afternoon Mr. Murphy came back and asked me to come out. I was in the bed hardly able to move. He said if I didn't work for him he would get up a crowd and strng me up to a tree and shoot me full of holes till I looked like a sifter bottom.

I left home that night and went to a friend's house to stay. Then I made my way to Birmingham.

(Notarized)

(Signed) TOM MASS

AAA FOR LANDLORDS

Simmesport, Louisiana.

Brother Editor:-

I saw M— at Simmesport. He told me that F. A. Sevan, the county agent for Avoyelles Parish asked him if his landlord had given him his part of the check on the cotton reduction program.

M— said that he received no money on the settlement and that he had heard nothing about it. Even Sevan told him that he was due part of the check.

M— saw his landlord and asked him why he didn't give him the money on his part of the check. The landlord told him that he was not due any.

That's how the cotton reduction program has helped the cropper in Louisiana. Will you let me know when the paper for our union is coming out. We need it.

—JM

OX FARMER

Dothan, Ala.

Brother Editor:-

I will write you to let you know that I am interested in your union. And my father is interested, for he is an ox farmer. They are in need, for they have gone thru the winter without clothes and without enough food, and they are still in this condition.

This section is mostly all ox-farmers. I am quite sure they would all be interested for they all need relief some way.

I will be glad for you to visit us all.

Yours truly,

—B

VOICE OF 70 MEMBERS

Notasulga, Ala

Brother Editor:-

I want to inform you of our peonage from between Tuskeegee to Montgomery. C. M. Howards has people to sign contracts for man and wife to plow every day rain or shine. And Saturday the wife has to work and iron in the evening. I think something should be done in Macon County about the treatment of Negroes.

C. M. Howards drove to my home and another Negroes a few weeks ago and took the oxen, corn, peanuts and other farm equipment. He is also government agent for the Rehabilitation Program. He wanted us to sign a contract for two years. Because we refused he took all our stuff away. Men wanting to work can't sign up because the white landlords say they are taking care of all the people. G. G. who deals with Mr. W. S. Parker received one ton of guano and one half of soda and $5.00 in money to make a crop last year. And the landlords call that taking care of people. His boy wanted to get a job and could not, because Parker told the agent not to hire his Negroes. This is the voise of 70 members.

Yours,

—S

P. S. Take due notice. Don't send me a letter till you hear from me. They are trying to trap me right now thru the Post Office I was told today. You will hear from me soon.

Farmers See Boost For Cooperation In Industrial Movement

South St. Paul Minn. (UNS)—Farmers have a stake in the craft-industrial union issue, and should understand the situation, says the *Farmers Union Herald*. It points out editorially that farmers have much to gain from industrial organization of the un-organized millions of workers in mass-production industries.

"Farmers cannot sell commodities to idle and busted working men," says the editorial, "nor may farmers sell commodities at prices which mean a living income for themselves to low and underpaid wage workers.

"We must have mass organizations of both workers and farmers for self and mutual protection."

After explaining the difference between craft and industrial unions, the farmers' paper points out that the evolution of industry has brought it about that "the industrial union has become a necessary weapon of defense on the part of great masses of the workers."

The paper expresses the hope that out of organization of the un-organized workers will come a stronger cooperative movement.

"Farmers have seen the need of the cooperative movement quicker than the city worker," it says, "but necessity and want are driving and will drive, the industrial worker to cooperation just as necessity has driven the farmers to it."

BELL'S HELL HOLE

Lowndes County, Alabama.

Brother Editor:-

I write you to let you know that I have contact with a worker in Lowndes County, around Calhoun. He told me that it is hell down there. They are only paying the workers 50 cents a day. This means that they only get $3.00 a week. The workers have to take these wages in orders and not in cash. And they can not trade it anywhere ,they can only trade at the N. J. BELL store. If they don't trade there they can't get anything at all.

Please take this up at once and see what can be done. These workers want better conditions. Take this up at once about these workers and for these workers.

—SD

LANDLORD ROBBERY

Montgomery, Ala.

Brother Editor:-

My landlord, C. C. Sharp, forced me to move off his place because I was active in organizing the union. He told me I owed him $135 and to pay it the next day. I haven't owed him anything for the last 8 years. My friends thought he might have me lynched, so after 2 weeks passed my friends helped me scrape up the money to pay him.

Me and my boy worked 17 days digging a pool for Sharp. I was supposed to get $2 a day. When I asked for a settlement for this I heard that he was going to get a lynch mob after me.

I tried to make arrangements for another place but Sharp went to the 2 places where I arranged and told them not to deal with me.

He forced me to move and said all I could take was my family. He made me leave a crop of Japanese Sugar Cane that is worth $150. Then he sent a truck over and got 85 bushels of sweet potatoes, 100 bushels of corn, about 1000 pounds of velvet beans and about 300 pounds of shucks. Also my mule. I had bedded 5000 stalks of sugar cane on another place and a friend of mine was going to sell it but Sharp went and got that to. He made me leave my Dodge car, a buggy, harness, a bee hive and plow sweeps on the place.

I got my pigs because I took them off when Sharp was in town. I had to move to town, I didn't have anything and there is no relief here now. I am trying to sue Sharp for what he stole from me but I don't know what kind of a deal I will get. I am counting on the union members to back me up.

—A.

BOYCOTT

Simmesport, La.

Brother Editor:-

John Lackey, a small merchant in the settlement of Legonier, La., a man who is a habitual drunkard, and a few of his cronies, are making threats against the organizer of the Share Croppers Union in Pente Coupee Parish. Mr. Lackey is openly threatening violence if they are able to catch the man who is organizing the Share Croppers and Tenants.

Altho he admits that he dosn't know what the organization is, he objects to it, as he feels himself to be somewhat of a moneyed man (he being a merchant with about $75.00 stock of goods, such as they are). Mr. Lackey makes his living from the trade of the people he is condemning for organizing for their protection.

He is aware that the people are reading the Farmers Weekly which he thinks is somewhat inflammatory, although he says that he has never read a copy, and admits that he thinks that maybe it is not so bad (because of the fact that it comes through the mails) but says that that is no reason why Negroes should be allowed to organize.

Should the ones that he is trying to destroy refuse to have anything to do with him, by refusing to buy his goods, or to speak to him he would not have quite so much money to spend for whiskey, or anything else.

Men of his type is what makes the lives of law abiding men, women and children of the working class so pitiable. Lackey would deny clothing food and shelter to those who support him, he would see their children grow up in ignorance, and all their lives slave and starve as their parents have done, THE WHITE AS WELL AS THE NEGRO'S just so he can keep the Negro people from demanding JUSTICE under the law. HE WOULD BE THE LAW.

—M.

Farm Secretary Stresses Necessity For Closer Cooperation And Support Between Farmers And Organized Labor

By W. C. IRBY
Member National Committee and Secretary, Alabama Farmers' Union

When I bought my suit of clothes, I refused to buy until I saw in the pocket of the coat, vest and pants a union label. That little label was a message to me from a worker somewhere in the United States that I could buy the clothes, knowing that he and his family had been treated fairly and humanely according to the union standard by the corporation that manufactured it.

I was helping him to bear his great burden of compelling the rich and powerful manufacturer, for whom he worked, for support of his family, to treat him and his family fairly and humanely.

When we put our label "the plow, hoe and rake" on a basket of fruit, sack of potatoes, or other packages of farm products and the organized workers refuse to buy farm products unless they show on the package our label as a message to them that we have received a fair price for them, they are helping us to bear our great burden of obtaining fair prices and our just share of what we produce for full enjoyment of our families.

FULFILLING THE LAW

We are also fulfilling the law laid down by Christ when He gave as part of His New Commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thy self."

We are doing our part toward establishing a government upon justice and whose people are imbued with so much love and sympathy for their fellowmen that they will neither harm one another or suffer it to be done by others if in their power to prevent it.

DO OUR PART, ORGANIZED LABOR WILL DO THE PART

Fellow members of the Farmers' Union, if we will do our part, the members of organized labor will do their part. They can't help us unless we put ourselves in position for them to help us.

The textile and garment workers can't demand that the manufacturers furnish them cotton and wool, with our label on it, to show that we have received our Farm Union price until our membership is sufficient in numbers to control the situation, and what is more their wives realize.

I know the textile workers. When I was a child my father told me that something must be done for them, that it was wrong to permit the cotton mills to work men, women and children sixteen hours a day and that is would destroy their vitality.

I played baseball five years in the cotton mill districts of my native state, South Carolina, studying and learning conditions in Southern cotton mills and as they are practically all controlled by the same capitalists I know all of them.

The textile workers of the South and parts of the West are just organizing. They are young in the union movement like thousands of our members and don't yet realize its power and possibilities. But in the North and East they have been organized when the government did not feed them, when they struck to force the mills to recognize their union. The military was used to suppress them. In Massachusetts railway men and other organizations went to the textile workers' homes to take children home with them and care for them, so they would not suffer during he strike.

Heartless, barbarous gunmen of the mills went on trains and took those children back into the homes of the strikers, practically saying to their fathers and mothers, "We can't starve you into submission, but you can't stand to hear your children cry from hunger."

As a result of their great sacrifice, I will give only one instance of what they gained for themselves, their fellow workers and posterity.

$6 TO UNION WORKERS, $3.50 TO UNORGANIZED WORKERS

A large cotton mill employing about 1,500 men and women in Alabama is owned by the same people who own about four mills in Massachusetts. Before the textile workers in the Alabama mill were organized, a worker in that mill was getting about $3.50 for exactly the same work that the Massachusetts mills, owned by the same people, were paying their union textile workers $6.00.

THESE PEOPLE WON'T LET ME RUN OR EMPLOY

A man goes into a textile mill and asks for a job. The official of the mill says, "Are you a member of the textile union?" If he says, "No, I thought I would not join that thing," the mill official would tell him, "Well, I am mighty sorry, I can't employ you. These men and women won't let me employ you. The minute I put you to work they would walk out and stay out until I put you out."

Under our agreement of mutual co-operation and support with the Labor, a man would walk up to the president of a mill and offer to sell him, say ten thousand bales of cotton, or wool which his mill needed, he would be asked, "Does your cotton or wool have the labels of the Farmers' Union upon them?" If he answered, "No, we don't belong to that thing and can't put the label on them," he would say, "I am sorry, I need your cotton, but without that label on the bale, I can't buy it, these people won't let me buy it for the minute I brought it in the mill, every man and woman would walk out until I put that cotton out.

TREAT FARMER RIGHT OR WE WON'T SPIN THE COTTON

The textile workers quit work, the official goes to weavers and asks, "Boys, what's wrong, you refuse to work?" They answer, "We are not getting enough wages." He asks, "Well, what do you want?" They tell him. He says, "I will do that—are you satisfied?" They answer, "Yes." He then says, "Start your looms." They then answer, "Yes, Mr. Mill Owner—we are satisfied, but have you treated the spinners right who are going to furnish the thread?" When he answered, "No," they would say, "Not a wheel turns here until you show us that you have treated the spinners right."

Under our agreement with the label league, when we do our part and control enough cotton and wool to keep the mills running, both spinners and weavers will say to the mill owner, "We are satisfied, but not a wheel will turn here until you show us that you have treated the farmer fair who furnishes the cotton."

The organized workers will demand the sales of merchants and everybody handling farm products if we will get ourselves in position for them to assist us.

Then is it not our duty to ourselves and family to do all in our power to increase our numbers and strength and help them grow stronger and more able to help us?